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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

November 08, 2021

SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

SPACE SUBCOMMITTEE

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STRATEGIC FORCES SUBCOMMITTEE

CYBER, INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES,
AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky, Director
Dr. Mitchell Wolfe, Chief Medical Officer
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
395 E Street, SW, Suite 9100
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Dr. Walensky and Dr. Wolfe,

As you know, on January 20, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden announced Executive Order 13991¹, which established the Safer Federal Workforce Taskforce under his authority from 5 U.S.C. § 7902(c). Later, on September 09, 2021, President Biden announced Executive Orders 14042² and 14043³, which promoted his authority to mandate vaccines for federal employees and federal contractors under 5 U.S.C. § 3301, 3302, 7301, 40 U.S.C. 101, and 3 U.S.C. § 301 respectively. Building on his previous Executive Order 13991, the President tasked the Safer Federal Workforce with implementing a vaccine protocol for all Federal employees and contractors, as well as Federal buildings and lands.

Since then, the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force has instituted guidelines for employers and employees as it relates to the vaccine mandate. As a part of these guidelines, the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force requires all Federal Agencies to comply with laws where an exception is required, including but not limited to, religious and disability claims.⁴ Further, the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force requires each Agency to establish and implement their own exemption process.⁵ Though, several Agencies seem to be unaware of their exemptions process, my office

¹ White House, Executive Order 13991 on Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing, Jan. 20, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/20/executive-order-protecting-the-federal-workforce-and-requiring-mask-wearing/>.

² White House, Executive Order 14042 on Ensuring Adequate COVID Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors, Sep. 09, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/09/09/executive-order-on-ensuring-adequate-covid-safety-protocols-for-federal-contractors/>.

³ White House, Executive Order 14043 on Requiring Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccination for Federal Employees, Sep. 09, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/09/09/executive-order-on-requiring-coronavirus-disease-2019-vaccination-for-federal-employees/>.

⁴ Safer Federal Workforce Task Force, Vaccinations, <https://www.saferfederalworkforce.gov/faq/vaccinations/>, October 28, 2021.

⁵ *Id.*

has been informed that many Agencies plan to follow the exemption guidelines laid out by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).⁶⁷⁸

This is concerning as the CDC only lists “a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) or an immediate allergic reaction”⁹ to be the criteria on who should not get vaccinated. By way of background, there are two people in my district, who got vaccinated and had ill effects.

The first is a young woman who, until she became sick, served in the U.S. Navy. She received her second Pfizer vaccine in March and by July she was paralyzed. After several tests, the doctors informed her that there is no other explanation than this being an adverse reaction from the vaccine.

The other is a woman who upon receiving her first Moderna vaccine became very ill and partially paralyzed on her left side. Her doctors have recommended she not get the second vaccine, as they say her partial paralysis is from the Moderna shot. However, her Agency informed her that she will likely be denied for an exemption because the CDC does not list non-allergic reactions, also known as adverse reactions, or doctor recommendations as a qualifying exemption. She now faces losing her job.

Let me be clear, the government should never take the place of a doctor. It is clear the CDC needs to expand their qualifying exemptions list to better assist Agencies in establishing and implementing an exemption process.

As such, I request the CDC to include adverse reactions (non-allergic) and doctor recommendations to their qualifying exemptions list so Agencies can better accommodate exemption requests.

I appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mo Brooks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Mo" and "Brooks" being capitalized and prominent.

Mo Brooks
Member of Congress

⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Overview and Safety, Oct. 28, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/Moderna.html>.

⁷ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Overview and Safety, Oct. 28, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/Pfizer-BioNTech.html>.

⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Johnson & Johnson's Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine Overview and Safety, Oct. 28, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines/janssen.html>.

⁹ *Id.*